

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 3

Introduced by Assembly Member V. Manuel Perez

December 1, 2008

An act to add Section 399.25 to the Public Utilities Code, relating to energy.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 3, as introduced, V. Manuel Perez. Energy: renewable energy workforce readiness program.

Under existing law, the Public Utilities Commission is vested with regulatory authority over public utilities, including electrical corporations. The Public Utilities Act imposes various duties and responsibilities on the commission with respect to the purchase of electricity by electrical corporations and requires the commission to review and adopt a procurement plan and a renewable energy procurement plan for each electrical corporation pursuant to the California Renewables Portfolio Standard Program. The program requires that a retail seller of electricity, including electrical corporations, purchase a specified minimum percentage of electricity generated by eligible renewable energy resources, as defined, in any given year as a specified percentage of total kilowatthours sold to retail end-use customers each calendar year (renewables portfolio standard).

This bill would require the commission, by January 1, 2011, to establish a Renewable Energy Workforce Readiness Program to ensure green collar career placement and advancement opportunities within California's renewable energy manufacturing, construction, installation, maintenance, and operation sectors that is targeted towards specified populations. The program would award training grants, on a competitive

basis, to implement and operate renewable energy worker training and education programs in the state. The commission would be required to submit to the Legislature, by January 1, 2012, a report on the implementation of the program. The bill would require the commission to implement the program, upon appropriation by the Legislature, using moneys from an unspecified fund.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (1) California is fortunate to have some of the finest solar, wind,
4 and geothermal resources in the world, giving California the
5 opportunity to lead the United States in the development of
6 renewable energy technologies and the creation of green collar
7 jobs.

8 (2) A 2006 analysis performed by the Renewable Energy Policy
9 Project looked at the employment gains throughout the United
10 States and found that, of all the 50 states, California has the greatest
11 potential to generate new renewable energy manufacturing activity.

12 (3) The Governor issued Executive Order S-14-08, increased
13 the state's renewable portfolio standard to 33 percent by 2020,
14 positioning California's economy, technology centers, financial
15 institutions, businesses, workers, and consumers to benefit from
16 the state's renewable energy efforts.

17 (4) California's investment in the production of renewable
18 energy and associated infrastructure could be targeted to strengthen
19 sectors and regions of the state economy suffering from high
20 unemployment rates and poverty.

21 (5) Educational institutions, in collaboration with labor and
22 community-based organizations, play a significant role in the
23 progress of renewable energy curriculum and career job placement
24 within emerging renewable energy industries.

25 (6) California's 80th Assembly District is recognized as
26 California's renewable energy zone with the most potential for
27 renewable energy development and also possesses one of the
28 highest unemployment rates in the state.

(7) Educational institutions in the 80th Assembly District, such as Imperial Valley College, College of the Desert, Palo Verde Community College, University of California at Riverside, and California State San Bernardino are seeking to establish collaborations with local labor and renewable energy organizations but lack infrastructure, technical assistance, and resources.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature to establish the “California Renewable Energy Workforce Readiness Program” in order for educational entities, labor organizations, local governments, and community-based organizations to work collectively to prepare California’s youth, military veterans, and workers for the economy of the future.

SEC. 2. Section 399.25 is added to the Public Utilities Code, to read:

399.25. (a) In furtherance of the requirements of this article, no later than January 1, 2011, the commission, in consultation with other appropriate state agencies, shall establish a Renewable Energy Workforce Readiness Program to ensure green collar career placement and advancement opportunities within California’s renewable energy manufacturing, construction, installation, maintenance, and operation sectors. The program shall be targeted at all of the following populations:

- (1) Low-income and disadvantaged populations.
- (2) At-risk youth.
- (3) Formerly incarcerated nonviolent offenders.
- (4) Displaced and incumbent workers in transition.
- (5) Veterans of past or present military service.

(b) The Renewable Energy Workforce Readiness Program shall award workforce training grants, on a competitive basis, to applicants that can identify and involve target worker populations and demonstrate the ability to implement and operate renewable energy worker training and education programs in California. Eligible applicants include any of the following entities:

- (1) Nonprofit organizations.
- (2) Local governments.
- (3) Labor organizations.
- (4) Community colleges.
- (5) Postsecondary educational institutions.
- (6) Local workforce training partnerships and collaboratives.

1 (c) In evaluating an application for a grant, the commission shall
2 assign higher priority to an application that satisfies one or more
3 of the following criteria:

4 (1) Serves individuals in families with incomes less than 250
5 percent of the federal poverty level.

6 (2) Includes collaboration with community-based nonprofit
7 organizations, labor organizations, and educational institutions
8 with expertise in serving low-income adults or youth.

9 (3) Links adult remedial education with occupational skills
10 training.

11 (4) Ensures that supportive services are integrated with education
12 and training, and delivered by organizations with direct access to
13 and experience with targeted populations.

14 (5) Involves employers and labor organizations in the
15 determination of relevant skills and competencies, ensuring that
16 the certificates or credentials that result from the training are
17 recognized by employers and labor organizations.

18 (6) Leverages additional public and private resources to fund
19 readiness programs, including cash or in-kind matches from
20 participating employers, nonprofits, or labor organizations.

21 (d) The commission shall collect and analyze labor market data,
22 track workforce trends, document academic and occupational
23 competencies, identify future skill needs, promote and support
24 local workforce training initiatives, and provide technical assistance
25 and capacity building to energy partnerships and apprenticeship
26 training programs, related to renewable energy and workforce
27 development in California.

28 (e) No later than January 1, 2012, the commission shall report
29 to the Legislature on the implementation of this section. The report
30 shall include a description of the entities receiving funding, the
31 activities carried out by these entities, and an assessment of the
32 results achieved by the program.

33 (f) The commission shall implement this section using moneys,
34 appropriated by the Legislature, from the fund established pursuant
35 to Section ____.